TOPIC SELECTION WORKSHEET

Selecting a History Day topic is a process of gradually narrowing down the area of history in which you are interested and focusing on a manageable subject.

Keep in mind the following when selecting a general topic and when narrowing your topic.
- The topic should be of interest to you.
- Make sure the topic fits the theme. (Consult with your teacher).
- The topic should be significant and important enough that everyone should know about it.
- The topic should be in-depth and narrow in scope. It is better to focus on one issue in detail than to cover many issues superficially.
- The topic should reflect the availability of primary and secondary resources. A local topic is often a good choice, since primary documents are more likely to be available in the community in which an event occurred or in which a person lived.

INTEREST

To start out, you should think about the factors above which will determine the type of topic you can choose to research. Next, your area of interest, type of project chosen, class curriculum requirements, and the theme will narrow your choices automatically. Answer the following questions:

1. My personal general interests include: (circle 5 interest subjects)

   - Adventure
   - Agriculture
   - Architecture
   - Arts
   - Children
   - Cities
   - Conflicts
   - Constitution
   - Controversy
   - Culture
   - Dance
   - Ecology
   - Economy
   - Education
   - Environment
   - Exile
   - Explorers
   - Experimental
   - Famous People
   - Film
   - Food
   - Gender Issues
   - Geography
   - Governments
   - Human Interest
   - Human Rights
   - Indigenous people
   - Labor Issues
   - Literature
   - Migration
   - Music
   - Nature
   - Political Issues
   - Oral History
   - Religion
   - Science
   - Social Groups
   - Social Issues
   - Sports
   - Travel
   - Technology
   - Theatre
   - War & peace
   - Womens’ Issue

Recent addition: Historical Website--A historical web site is a collection of web pages, interconnected with hyperlinks, that presents primary and secondary sources, interactive multimedia, and historical analysis.

2. Historical events or periods of most interest me include? Why? (List 3)

   - ____________________________________________
   - ____________________________________________
   - ____________________________________________

3. Family connections to any topics: ____________________________________________
**THEME**

You then focus on the annual theme to see if there are subject areas that fit their ideas.

4. This year's History Day Theme is: ______________________________________________________

   Find and write the definition of each word of the theme:
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

**TOPIC**

Next make a list of topics you are interested in which relate to the theme.

5. Topic ideas of interest include: (List 4 topics of personal interest)
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

6. My preliminary topic idea is: __________________________________________________________

   A textbook description of the topic states: ________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

7. The topic is related to (the theme) ___________________________ because ____________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

**ISSUE**

Take another step in the narrowing process by selecting a specific issue within the topic.

8. The key person, event, or movement I plan to focus on is _________________________________

   because _____________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

The following is an example of the topic selection.

**Interest:** Human Rights

**Theme:** Triumph & Tragedy

**Topic:** Nelson Mandela & Apartheid

**Issue:** End of segregation in South Africa

Your topic selection is:

**Interest:** _________________________________

**Theme:** _________________________________

**Topic:** _________________________________

**Issue:** _________________________________